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**YUGOSLAVIA:**

**Controversial Party Plenum Opens**

*Orthodox party leaders see the Central Committee plenum that opens today as a chance to stem growing liberalization in Yugoslavia, but they are likely to have only limited success; the plenum may only show the central party apparatus's continued inability to reassert influence.* [REDACTED]

The plenum is being held at the behest of party conservatives—primarily leaders of some southern republics, the military, and internal security forces, according to various sources. These hardliners are openly concerned about the regime's lessening ability to control its many critics and are pushing for tighter control over the press and for restraints on ethnic nationalism, public protests, and budding political pluralism. [REDACTED]

Reform-minded leaders—mainly from Slovenia and Serbia—will put up a strong defense of continued democratization. Media reporting indicates they previously forced a two-month postponement of the plenum. The centrist majority in the leadership, meanwhile, will support action only against extreme examples of dissent and nationalism. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Serbian leaders are likely to try to redirect debate toward the complaints of the minority ethnic Serbs of Kosovo Province—who mounted two large protests last week. Serbian intellectuals secretly organized similar protests last year and may have sparked the recent confrontations to ensure federal discussion of their grievances. [REDACTED]

The Central Committee at best will probably paper over differences in any final document. The plenum, therefore, will do little to slow the pace of liberalization or to overcome differences between the loosely grouped factions. This, in turn, could lead to more Western-style openness, including increased political protests. As a result, the credibility of the central party would weaken even further and impair the government leadership's ability to implement effective policies. [REDACTED]

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